According to the Syllabus of:

CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations

O Level Islamiyat

Work Book

(Quran Passages themes
Question 2)

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Izhar Publications

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Quran Passages

Main Themes

Work Book

Jawaid Aurangzaib
Subject Specialist (O/A LEVEL Islamiyat)

(O level Islamiyat)

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Q 1. (a) Using passages you have studied, write about the main teachings about God in the Qur'an. [10]

(b) How might these teachings affect a Muslim's life today? [4]

Marking Scheme (a)

The passages in the syllabus relating to God in Himself are: 2.555; 6.101–103; 41.37; 42.4– 5; 112. These are not the only passages the candidates can use.
Candidates can use any number of passages to write about but they should write with some detail about the suras and not merely give general comments/themes about them. Candidates may say that God tells humankind about his oneness, e.g. but they should elaborate on this by writing things like, He uses the word Ahad to tell humans about His oneness but it is not just that He is one, he does not have any partners or any children to share in His power/authority and so humans should not think of Him as like themselves. This is further emphasised by the line, there is no one like Him, meaning that no one can compare to what he looks like or what He is capable of doing. Another example could be that God tells humans about His knowledge, which is seen in passages 2.255 and 6.101–103. They could quote what these passages say about God's Knowledge and elaborate on what this means. There may be some repetition from Q1a, but this answer should be more focused and more detailed, and the passages should be linked in some way.

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Marking Scheme (b)

Candidates should be careful not to give statements, but try to qualify their answers with some reasoning. Candidates could say that many Muslims are busy in their lives and may find it difficult to connect with God, but suras such as 41.37 are a reminder in their everyday lives of who is in control; or they could say that despite being the All-Powerful creator, he is not detached from humans as He asks them to seek forgiveness from Him and He is ready to forgive as seen in sura 42.4–5. There are many answers the candidates can offer but the best ones will give more concrete answers with some development, rather than general statements.

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Q 2.(a) From the Qur'an passages set for special study in the syllabus, describe the ways in which God gave knowledge of Himself to His Messengers. [10]

(b) 'Undergoing hardships brings a person closer to God.' Agree or disagree with this statement, giving reasons for your answer. [4]

Marking Scheme (a)

The relevant passages from the syllabus are 2.30–37, 6.75–79, 5.110, 93 and 108.
These passages mention the prophets Adam, Ibrahim, Isa and Muhammad.
Candidates could say that God gave Adam knowledge about Himself through the things he was taught the names of, and the lessons he learnt in obedience to God. Adam was taught the names of all the things in creation, and because of his status near God, the angels were asked to bow to him. Iblis refused, and was banished. He vowed to lead Adam and his future generations astray. He did this by making Adam approach the tree he had been forbidden from. Adam realised his mistake and through this event turned to God for forgiveness. Through these events Adam learnt about God's creation, His Knowledge and His forgiveness.
Ibrahim was given knowledge of God through the law and order of the heavens and the earth. He was searching for his Lord, and looked to the stars and the moon and the sun, which people at his time worshipped. God inspired him to realise that the things in creation that do not last cannot be the things to be worshipped as God does not change. Through these events he turned himself to believe in God and did not associate partners with Him. God showed Ibrahim His Unity, and His control over creation.
Isa was given special miracles which helped him understand the power of God. He was given the holy spirit which allowed him to speak to the people as a child and when he was older. He was also taught the Law and the Gospel to teach to the people. He was also able to give life to the dead and heal the sick, by the will of God. This all showed Isa the favours he was given by God which allowed him to believe in Him and follow Him.
The Prophet Muhammad faced hardships like the other prophets, but God reminds him that He gave him blessings in this life and the next, which relieved the Prophet and gave him reassurance that God was looking after him. God gave him shelter, guidance and independence, and also gave him blessings in the form of Kawthar, which some say is a river in paradise, or offspring. He learns about God through His generosity, mercy and guidance.

Candidates should expand on the above points and better candidates will write about at least two of the prophets mentioned. Candidates should not merely describe stories, but relate it to knowledge of Himself.

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Marking Scheme (b)

Candidates could agree and say, e.g. that all prophets were tested which allowed them to get closer to God, likewise humankind now can get closer to their Lord through their hardships, as long as they reflect and understand that God is testing them. Also, by remaining patient and steadfast, and not leaving their worship, they will gain rewards and understanding. Prophets were tested and remained steadfast, so Muslims should also expect to be tested and they should also remain steadfast.
They could say they don't agree, e.g. because not everyone goes through the same hardships, that people are different so they may react differently to hardships so they may not necessarily know they are being tested, but remaining true to prayer, fasting and the Five Pillars is more important and more likely to get a person closer to God.

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Q 3. (a) From the Qur'anic passages you have studied, outline the relationship between God and two of His messengers who were sent before the Prophet Muhammad. [10]
(b) Explain why God sends his revelations through messengers. [4]

Marking Scheme (a)

Candidates can choose any two messengers before the Prophet Muhammad that they have studied through the prescribed passages in the syllabus [though not exclusively]. They should mention who the prophets are and talk about God's relationship with that prophet, how it is mentioned in the Qur'an, teachings that God gave them and any miracles they were given. Better candidates could give references to other suras in the Qur'an where they are mentioned. Candidates should give a description of the prophet's experience, where usually they go through adversity and God helps them. It could be mentioned that God defends them against their enemies.

Marking Scheme (b)

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Candidates should be able to talk about the revelations given to all messengers not just the Prophet Muhammad. They should talk about mankind's need for guidance and inspiration, and why messengers/humans were the best way to send that guidance, e.g. it was sent to different nations in different languages so it would be universal and the messengers convinced through strength of character and moral example.

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Q (a) From passages you have studied from the Qur'an, write about God's relationship with humankind. [10]

(b) Explain the significance of the Qur'an being revealed to humankind. [04]

Marking Scheme (a)

The suras which are in this section of the syllabus are Sura 1, Sura 2.21–22, Sura 96.1–5, Sura 99, Sura 114.

Candidates could choose at least two passages from the syllabus or other passages to write about. It is necessary to reference passages to gain the higher levels. Candidates should give reference to the suras and how they talk about God's creation. They could mention how the suras that they have studied allow humankind to see the link between them and God. This link can be talked about in different ways, e.g. what God has given humankind and what God expects from humans in return. They should be able to give specific examples, e.g. God giving knowledge to humans; God judging humankind for his actions. Higher level answers could mention how these passages help humans to remember their Lord and be grateful for what they have been given.

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Marking Scheme (b)

Good answers here will give a thoughtful insight as to the relevancy of the Qur'an to humankind. Relevant answers should be credited, but some things candidates could mention are that it was sent for the guidance of all humankind as God wants them to remain close to Him; it helps them to understand their Lord, and allow them to connect to Him; it gives them teachings which they can follow in their everyday lives. Answers might consider the ignificance both historically, at the time of the Prophet, and for the wider community since then.

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Q. (a) Write about the relationship between God and two of the prophets you have studied in the Qur'an (not including the Prophet Muhammad). [10]

(b) Why do prophets go through difficulties in their lives? [04]

Marking Scheme (a)

Candidates can choose any two messengers before the Prophet Muhammad that they have studied through the prescribed passages in the syllabus [though not exclusively]. They should mention who the prophets are and might give reference to the suras they have studied. They could talk about God's relationshipwith that prophet, which is mentioned in the Qur'an, teachings that God gave them, and anymiracles they were given. Better candidates could be able to give references to other suras in the Qur'an where they are mentioned. Candidates should give a description of the prophet's experience, where usually they go through adversity and God helps them. It should be mentioned that God defends them against their enemies.
[Verses in the syllabus - 2.30-37; 6.75-79; 5.110; 93; 108]

Marking Scheme (b)

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Candidates could mention that God tests his prophets in different ways that they go through hardships to deal with the difficulties of their mission, especially as many will face opposition from their communities. They also go through difficulties to strengthen their faith which will in turn help them to carry on their mission. Overcoming adversity and strengthening your faith helps you get closer to God, which is a lesson for all Muslims.

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Q. (a) Using Qur'an passages from the syllabus, describe what the Qur'an teaches about God's responsibility to His creatures and their duties towards Him. [10]

(b) 'The Qur'an teaches that humans should be responsible towards the environment.' Give reasons to agree or disagree with this statement. [4]

Marking Scheme (a)

The suras which are in this section of the syllabus are Sura 1, Sura 2.21–22, Sura 96.1–5, Sura 99, Sura 114. Candidates should choose themes from at least two prescribed passages from the syllabus to write about. They can reference other passages to support their answer, but it is not necessary for them to be able to gain high levels. Candidates should give reference to the suras and how they talk about God's creation. They could mention how the suras that they have studied allow humankind to see the link between them and God. This link can be talked about in different ways, e.g. what God has given humankind and what God expects from humans in return. They should be able to give specific examples, e.g. God giving knowledge to humans; God judging humankind for their actions. They could also say that the passages teach Muslims about the provision God has given them, as well as the fact that they have a responsibility to God and fellow creation and they will be accountable for their actions. These passages should help Muslims to remember their Lord and be grateful for what they have been given. Candidates should elaborate on these points using examples.

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Marking Scheme (b)

Candidates can choose to agree or disagree but they have to give a reason for their choice. If they agree they could, for example, say that God has given humankind everything it needs for its survival and comfort, and they should not abuse this privilege by being ungrateful or wasteful. If they disagree they could say, e.g., that everything has been provided by God and it is there to use for humans' benefit therefore there is no sin in using it how they please, or that everything is known by God therefore humans do not need to worry about how they act, as God can restore whatever is depleted.

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Q. (a) Using Qur'an passages you have studied from the syllabus, describe how God guided His messengers to increase their belief in Him. Refer to at least two messengers in your answer. [10]

(b) God sends humankind messengers from amongst their own communities. Explain why this is significant. [4]

Marking Scheme (a)

The relevant passages from the Qur'an are 2.30–37, 6.75–79, 5.110, 93 and 108.
These passages mention the prophets Adam, Ibrahim, Isa and Muhammad.
Candidates could say that Adam was guided by God through the knowledge he was given, which even the angels were not given. He was taught the names of all the things in creation, and because of his status near God, the angels were asked to bow to him. Iblis refused, and was banished. He vowed to lead Adam and his future generations astray. He did this by making Adam approach the tree he had been forbidden from. Adam realised his mistake and through this event turned to God for forgiveness.

Ibrahim was guided to the truth through the law and order of the heavens and the earth. He was searching for his Lord, and looked to the stars and the moon and the sun, which other people worshipped. God inspired him to realise that the things in creation that do not last cannot be the things to be worshipped as God does not change. Through these events he turned himself to believe in God and did not associate partners with Him.

Jesus/Isa was given special miracles which helped him understand the power of God. He was given the holy spirit which allowed him to speak to the people as a child and when he was older. He was also taught the Law and the Gospel to teach to the people. He was also able to give life to the dead and heal the sick, by the will of God. This all showed Isa the favours he was given by God which allowed him to believe in Him and follow Him.
The Prophet Muhammad faced hardships like the other prophets, but God reminds him that he gave him blessings in this life and the next, which relieved the Prophet and gave him reassurance that God was looking after him. God gave him shelter, guidance and independence, and also gave him blessings in the form of Kawthar, a river in paradise. So he is told to believe in God and tell his people about Him so they can too turn to Him when in need.
Candidates should expand on the above points and should write about at least two of the prophets mentioned, giving quotes and examples.

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Marking Scheme (b)

Candidates could say that prophets sent from amongst a community will be able to understand the needs and condition of the people which will make it easier for him to teach the message to them in a way that suits them. Also, if he is from the community the people are more likely to be able to relate to him as they can see that he is the same as them and he is also able to practise and benefit from the teachings he is giving. If angels were sent as opposed to humans, then people may not have been able to see that they can practise the message in their everyday lives, or they may have started to worship the angels instead.

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Q. (a) From Qur'an passages you have studied, write about what lessons can be learnt from God's conversations with Adam and Jesus. [10]
(b) As God's "representative (khalifa) on Earth" say how men and women can serve God, giving examples. [4]

Marking Scheme (a)

Candidates should not paraphrase the translation here. Rather they should briefly describe the story of the prophet and write some of the lessons from it. Candidates who only use the passages in the syllabus should be able to get high marks.

(a) Adam (2.30–37): Adam was the first human to be created by God. God had told the angels He would place a representative on earth, and the angels asked why, if he will only make mischief unlike the angels who only glorify God. When God spoke to Adam, he taught Him and gave him knowledge of things that the angels did not know. God gives knowledge to whom He wills. It shows the superiority of humans over angels due to what they know, and so it stresses the importance of gaining knowledge.
God also told Adam that he and his wife should live in the Garden but they were not to touch a specific tree. Satan, who was jealous of Adam and had refused to bow to him, came to tempt Adam and his wife into eating from the tree. He is from the mischief makers who whisper evil into the minds/hearts of humans. God sent Adam and his wife to live on earth. Adam realised his mistake and through this event turned to God for forgiveness. And God, because He is the most merciful, turned towards Adam, meaning He forgave Him. This passage tells Muslims about the favours God gives his prophets. He gives them knowledge for guidance, and He forgives when people turn to Him in repentance.
Jesus (5.110): Jesus/Isa was given special miracles which helped him understand the power of God. God asked Jesus to recount the blessings that God had given him and his mother (Maryam), showing that God gives his prophets favours to help them in their lives. God then gives a list of the things He has given Jesus, and the benefits of those favours: He was given the Holy Spirit which allowed him to speak to the people as a child and when he was older. He was also taught the Law and the Gospel to teach the people how to live their lives in accordance to God's laws. He was also able to give life to the dead and heal the sick, by the will of God. He also protected Jesus from the unbelievers who accused Jesus of magic and did not believe His powers were a sign of God's majesty. This all showed Jesus the favours he was given by God which allowed him to believe in Him and follow Him.

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Marking Scheme (b)

Muslims can serve God on earth by understanding and fulfilling their obligation to Him, primarily through praying and fulfilling the five pillars, and by not disobeying His commands. They should be grateful to Him for what He has given them, food, shelter, clothing, and thank Him. This can be done by praying, reciting Qur'an, being generous to others, helping those in need, e.g. by feeding the poor, giving gifts and charity. They should also look after the provisions God has given them, whether it be the food and the environment it grows in, the knowledge He gives for guidance or the people who are in a person's life for their help and wellbeing, e.g. by not wasting food or eating too much, by learning something and teaching others, by respecting teachers and colleagues. These are just some examples; candidates can use their own.

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Q. (a) Describe what the following suras tell Muslims about the circumstances in which they were revealed:
112 (Al-Ikhlas) and 108 (Al-Kauthar). [10]
(b) To what extent is the Qur'an the basis of legal thinking in Islam? [4]

Marking Scheme (a)

Candidates should have studied both these suras as part of the syllabus, and should be able to give more than just the themes in them, which is required for Q1.

Sura 112: (Al-Ikhlas)

This sura was revealed when the Quraysh asked the Prophet about his God's ancestry. The content of the sura clearly established God's Oneness, and that He had no beginning or end, unlike the idols that were worshipped by the pagans at the time. It also negated the idea of the trinity which the Christians believed in, as well as negating that God had any physical or human characteristics. As the Prophet was preaching his message, many people would ask about his God, and this sura would be recited as an answer, giving a short and comprehensive insight into Islam's belief in God.

Sura108: (Al-Kauthar)

This was revealed when the Prophet was going through a period of difficulty with the Quraysh. Both his sons had died and the Quraysh used this as an opportunity to mock and tease the Prophet. They said that he was "cut off from his root" (abtar), meaning that he had no male decedents to carry his name, and they thought that his message would die when the Prophet passed away. God revealed these verses to console and give hope to the Prophet that it would not be him, but his enemies that would be cut off, and that he would be given abundant blessings in this life and the next.

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Marking Scheme (b)

Candidates could mention that being divinely revealed, the Qur'an is the primary source of legal thinking. They could mention that other sources are also used. Some candidates may say that the main rulings of Islamic Law are all based upon the Qur'an, even if the details come from other sources, therefore it is essential for legal scholars to understand it. Even in modern times, new rulings are always checked with the Qur'an to ensure there is no conflict, before being accepted. Candidates need to address the "to what extent" part of the question as this is an evaluative question not a descriptive one.

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